



California Labor Federation | AFL-CIO

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Governor Gray Davis
State Capitol
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: **SB 1044 (Kuehl) - SUPPORT**

Dear Governor Davis:

I am writing on behalf of the California Labor Federation, AFL-CIO, to urge your signature on SB 1044 (Kuehl), which would require the Director of Industrial Relations to review and prepare a report that assesses the potential impact of international trade agreements on California labor laws and regulations.

As international trade plays a growing role in the state's economy, it is imperative that legislators be continually appraised of the relationships between global treaties and their impact on labor laws. International trade pacts, such as NAFTA and the WTO, pose a serious challenge to California's labor and employment standards and throw into question the ability of state legislators to create laws that are enforceable.

A challenge to our procurement practices is one area that is of particular concern to organized labor. Under the international trade laws of the WTO, federal and state laws governing procurement may be deemed to be GATT-illegal and in conflict with free trade principles if they place restrictive criteria on contract recipients. There is a serious danger that California's legislators will no longer be able to enact enforceable laws that reflect the interests of their constituents simply because such laws may be challenged in international trade tribunals.

SB 1044 would make assessments of the nexus between international trade law and state law available to the legislature and, thus, help guard against state labor laws being weakened by trade pacts. In so doing, valuable resources invested in creating meaningful state labor laws would not be wasted and state legislators would have the information necessary to insure that the laws that are enacted will withstand the scrutiny of international trade bodies.

We urge your signature on this important bill.

Sincerely,

Tom Rankin
President

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Cc: Senator Sheila Kuehl